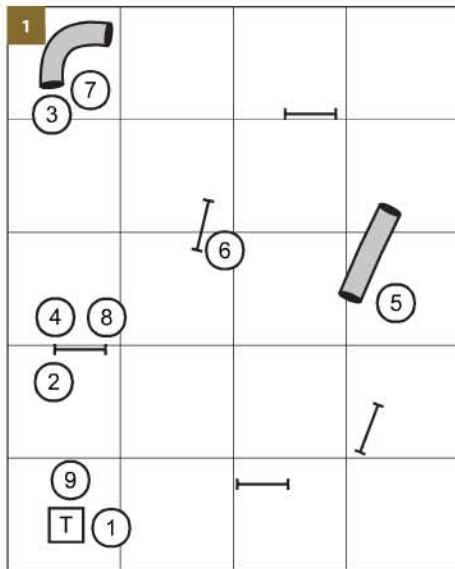


Improve Your
Handling Skills
at Home

Backyard Dogs

By Karen Holik

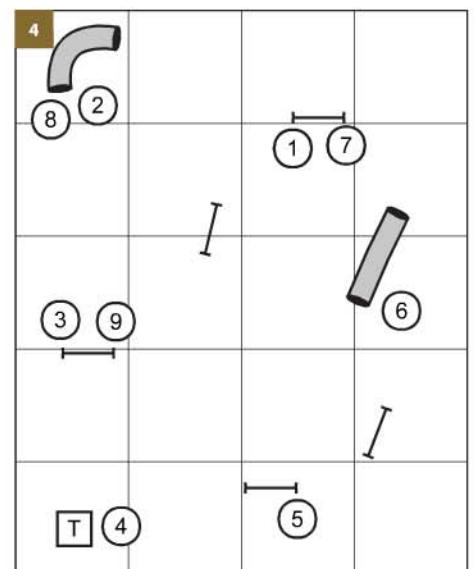
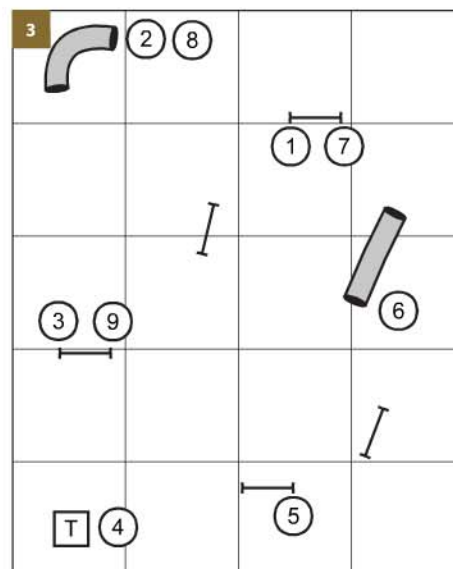
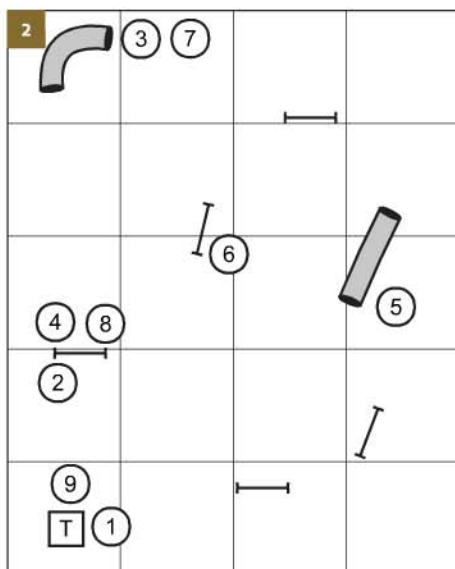


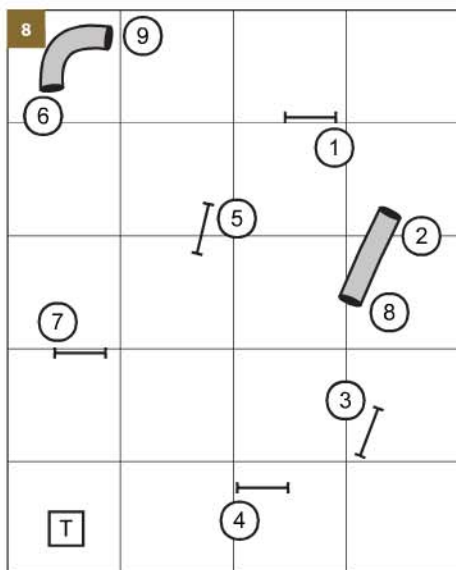
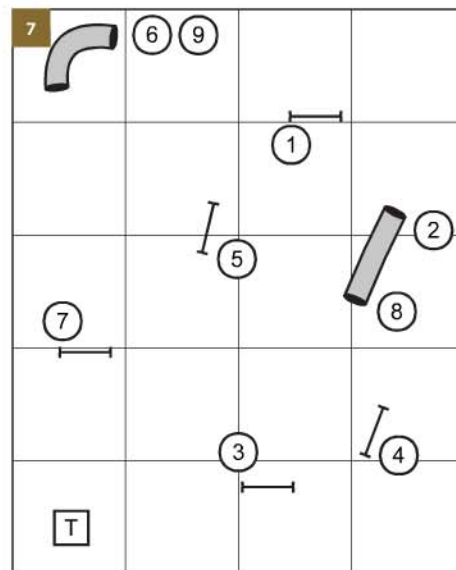
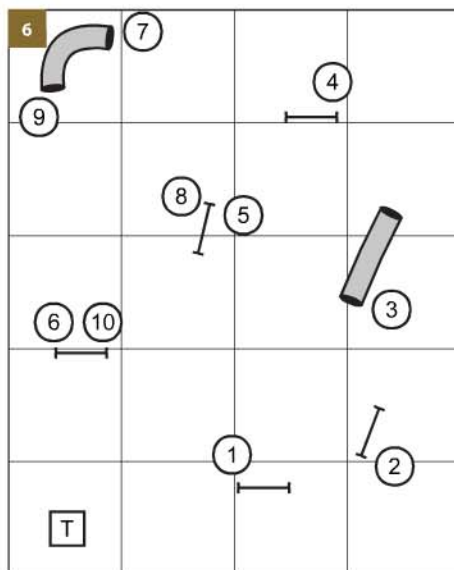
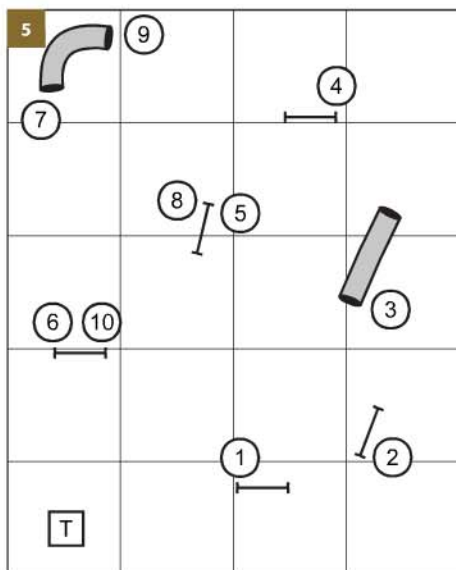
This month's exercises contain lots of fun tunnel work, including discriminating between two tunnel entrances, sending to tunnels, and rear and front crosses at tunnels.

Figure 1 shows some straightforward entrances to tunnels that should not be too complicated. **Figure 2** asks the dog to bypass the obvious tunnel entrance to take the other entrances at #3 and #7. You can either start with your dog on your left and pull the dog to the correct entrance; or you can do a front cross before the tunnel to insure the proper tunnel entry. Try it each way and see what works better for you. Also try practicing a front cross at the exit of tunnel #5 in both Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 3 again shows some straightforward entrances to the tunnels. Try running this exercise and see how fast you can go with your dog.

Figure 4 has some tricky tunnel entrances again that should improve with front crosses after jumps #1 and #7 if you have your dog on your right. You can also try this sequence with your dog on your right and keep him on that side for the remainder of the sequence.





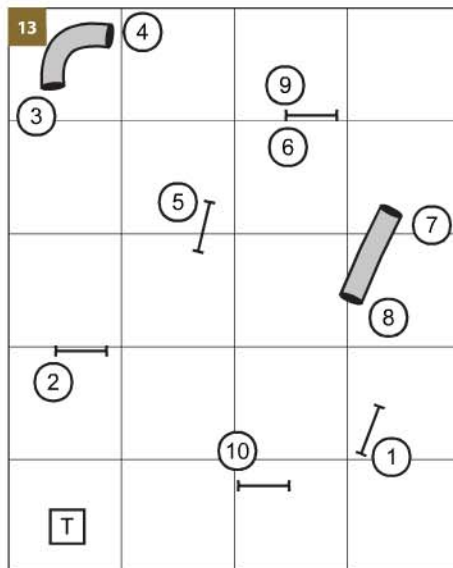
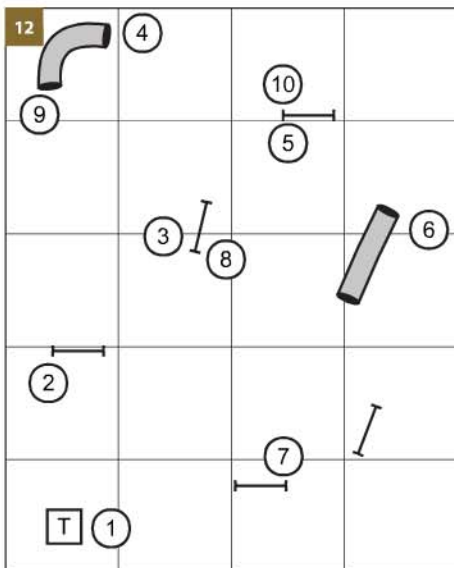
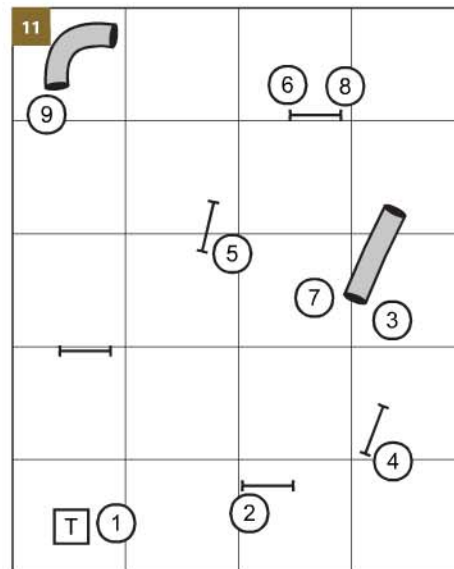
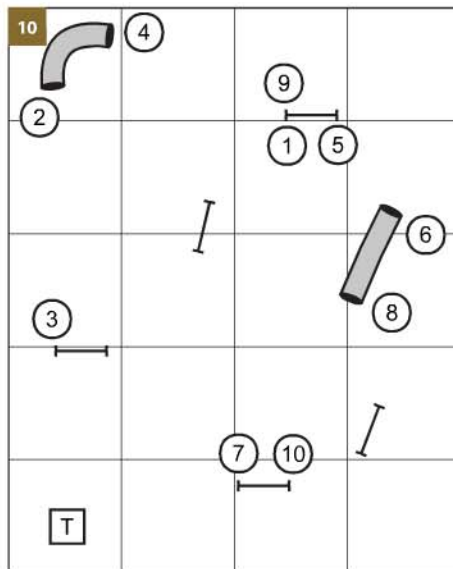
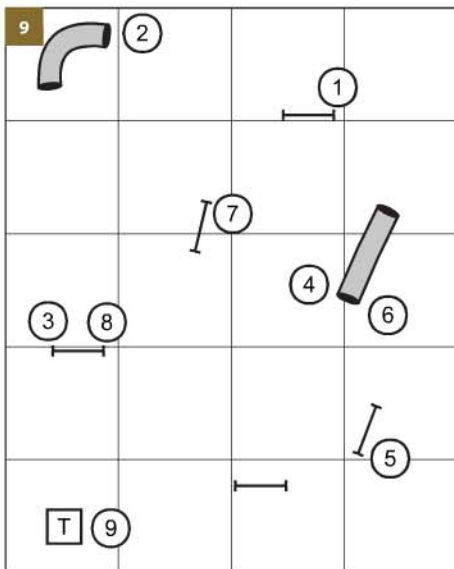
In **Figures 5 and 6** you want your dog to drive farther out of the tunnel to take the other side of jump #4. If I want my dog to drive farther out of a tunnel, I don't say his name or call too soon to insure he keeps driving ahead. The rest of the course has more tricky tunnel entrances.

In **Figure 7** can you send your dog over jump #1 and to the #2 tunnel and get ahead for a front cross at jump #3? Try keeping your dog on your left and then your right for #4, #5, and #6 and make sure your dog gets the correct tunnel entrance.

In **Figure 8** you will probably have to trust your dog and send to jump #1 and the #2 tunnel to be able to get your dog to turn out of the tunnel to jump #3. Again, try keeping your dog on your left and then your right through jumps #4, #5, and #6.

In **Figures 9 and 10** try running with your dog from the start and also try to take a lead-out. Can you do a rear cross at tunnel #6 in Figure 9?

Figures 11 through 13 offer more fast and fun tunnel work. See how fast you can go with your dog and still get through the course efficiently. Have fun! 🐾



Karen Holik has been involved in agility for over 10 years as a competitor and also a USDAA and AKC judge. She has competed in the finals of the USDAA Grand Prix World Championships seven times with all her dogs: two Shelties, a Border Collie, and an All-American. Her youngest dog, ADCH MACH2 Triune's Feelin Hot Hot Hot (a.k.a. Sizzle) won the Steeplechase event at the USDAA World Championships in 2003 and 2006. Karen and Sizzle were members of the AKC/USA World Team in 2003, 2005, and 2006. Karen offers private lessons and seminars and can be reached at oncourseagility@comcast.net.